NATIONAL CANNERS ASSOCIATION

Information Letter

FOR N. C. A. MEMBERS

No. 221 | Washington, D. C. | August 13, 1927

CONTENTS

	Page
Contract let for addition to Association's office building	673
Use of starch in packing corn	674
Navy in market for canned beets	675
Commerce Yearbook for 1926 published	675
General Supply Committee seeks bids	675
Culls and left-overs not suitable for canning industry	675
Compilation of laws on weights and measures issued	676
Freight rate complaint filed	676
Borer quarantine amended to simplify corn inspection	676
Growth of canning industry in United Kingdom	677
Handbook of labor statistics issued	678
Should acquaint buyers with effect of storage temperatures	678
Insect pest in loganberry-growing districts	679
Car loadings	679
Retail trade in July	679
Portuguese sardine industry encounters difficulties	680
Dates of canning crop reports	680
Questions constitutionality of feature of Federal Trade Commission Act	680

Contract Let for Addition to Association's Office Building

The executive officers of the National Canners Association, carrying out the instructions of the Board of Directors at its meeting in May, have just let the contract for the erection of an addition to the present office building in Washington, which will provide much needed additional office space. The contractor is the Charles H. Tompkins Company, which is one of the best known in Washington, and which has erected many of the capital's large buildings.

The addition will be fireproof throughout and so constructed that it can be fully utilized should it be decided later to replace the present office building. The basement will be used for storage purposes for experimental packs which are now located in the Georgetown property of the Association, and this property will be sold and the money received for it applied as a credit on the new addition.

The first floor provides three additional offices and a men's lavatory and wash room. The second floor is identical with the first, and includes a women's rest room, lavatory and wash room. The third floor will carry out the general plan of additional office space.

The contract is on a cost-plus basis, with a maximum charge in keeping with present building conditions of Washington. As is well-known, this is an exceedingly favorable time to erect the addition because of slack conditions in the general building trade.

The building is to be completed on December 15, which will enable the Association to give up the lease it now has on out-

side office space and will bring all the Association's personnel under one roof, as well as provide for the storage of experimental packs. Wrecking will commence on Monday morning, August 15. The experimental canning machinery plant is now being removed so as to let the workmen make a prompt start at that time.

Use of Starch in Packing Corn

Canners continue to receive letters from starch-manufacturing firms, offering their product for use in canning corn. As these letters may leave the impression that starch is generally or usually employed in corn canning, there is reproduced below the text of a circular sent last year to corn canners on this subject.

"The use of starch, according to the regulations of the Department of Agriculture, is justified only under exceptional conditions and is permitted only under these conditions. The Department holds it a violation of the law to add starch so as to conceal inferiority, or to 'stretch' the corn by the addition of a greater amount of water or brine than would be added if starch were not used.

"*Whenever starch is used in packing corn the Department of Agriculture requires that the label must disclose this fact.*

"The attitude of the Department is stated in Service and Regulatory Announcement No. 1, January, 1914, and since that time there has been no change in the Department's position. Replying to an inquiry the acting chairman of the Board of Food and Drug Inspection stated at that time:

"The Board has been advised that the following situation confronts the canners of corn in certain sections of the country:

"The corn has ripened very late, and in spite of the fact that the corn is of the finest quality and flavor, it lacks sufficient starch to pack properly on account of the fact that the liquids will separate from the solids in the canning, and, therefore, in order to produce a satisfactory product it is necessary to add cornstarch to the extent of 1 to 1½ per cent.

"In the opinion of the Board, on the facts as stated, and, if no inferiority of the corn is concealed, this addition would be permitted, under regulation 25, section 7 (a), which states that 'When a substance of a recognised quality commonly used in the preparation of a food or drug product is replaced by another substance not injurious or deleterious to health, the name of the substituting substance shall appear upon the label.' If a product, prepared as indicated, were plainly labeled 'Sweet Corn with added Starch,' there would not appear to be any violation of the Food and Drugs Act.

"It is, however, plain to the Board that starch may be added to sweet corn in a manner whereby inferiority is concealed, and whereby water is

added, which addition of starch would clearly constitute a violation of the Act. The canners are, however, familiar with the conditions under which they are working, and the Board is not; the canners should, therefore, be able to decide the proper course from the above statement of facts."

Navy in Market for Canned Beets

The Navy Department is asking for bids on canned beets, 80,000 pounds for delivery at Boston, 120,000 pounds at Brooklyn, 80,000 pounds at Philadelphia, 240,000 pounds at Hampton Roads, 300,000 pounds at Mare Island, and 240,000 pounds at Bremerton. Bids will be opened September 27. Copies of Schedule 7562 on which to submit bids may be obtained from the Bureau of Supplies and Accounts, Navy Department, Washington, D. C.

Commerce Yearbook for 1926 Published

A complete story of the industrial progress of American trade and industry is told in the Commerce Yearbook for 1926, copies of which may be obtained from any district or cooperative office of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce or direct from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. The price is one dollar.

General Supply Committee Seeks Bids

The General Supply Committee is advertising for proposals for various classes of articles, including canned foods, bids to be opened on August 24. Copies of the schedule on which to submit bids may be obtained from the General Supply Committee, Building F, 7th and "B" Streets, Northwest, Washington, D. C. The canned foods included in the advertisement are as follows: Apples, apricots, asparagus, beans, beets, cherries, corn, figs, peaches, pears, peas, pineapple, rhubarb, spinach, and tomatoes.

Culls and Left-Overs Not Suitable for Canning Industry

Periodically the Association has been asked for its advice with respect to plans for the utilization of cull or surplus raw products for canning purposes. In reply to a recent inquiry, the Association wrote as follows:

"Our frank opinion is that tomatoes of the quality you describe should not be used for canning. The better class of the industry has always endeavored to use raw products of only the finest grade and suitable variety. In order to further this effort, the Bureau of Raw Products was established, and one of its principal duties is to see that the canner is always supplied

with information which will enable him to have the best possible products from the standpoint of proper maturity, suitable variety and freedom from plant disease or insect injury.

"Our information is that the tomato growers in your section have experienced considerable trouble and loss from the presence of the nail-head fungus and other plant diseases. Certainly tomatoes so affected are not suitable for the requirements of the canning industry.

"The canning industry is in no sense based upon the utilization of left-over, cull, or inferior raw products of any kind. On the other hand, the requirements of the canner are for tomatoes and other raw products properly ripened on the plant and of the best quality possible to produce.

"If it is desired to utilize the second-quality and cull material which you mention, we believe it would be better to place this before the consumer in the fresh state in open packages rather than to try to utilize it for canning purposes, since the consumer would not be deceived as to the actual quality of the product when sold in open packages."

Compilation of Laws on Weights and Measures Issued

The Bureau of Standards of the Department of Commerce has issued as miscellaneous publication No. 20, a compilation of Federal and state laws relating to weights and measures. This book of 976 pages is the third edition of the Bureau's volume on weights and measures, and is sold by the Superintendent of Documents of the Government Printing Office at Washington for $2.30.

Freight Rate Complaint Filed

A complaint (Docket 19903) has been filed with the Interstate Commerce Commission against the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railway asking the establishment of reasonable rates on canned fruits and vegetables, in carloads, from Columbia, Tenn., to Georgia points.

Borer Quarantine Amended to Simplify Corn Inspection

An amendment to the European corn borer quarantine, announced by the Secretary of Agriculture, William M. Jardine, will simplify the methods of making inspections of shelled corn for shipment from the infested districts in the Autumn, according to an announcement by the Department of Agriculture. The announcement states:

The first season's administration of the regulations requiring the inspection and certification of shelled corn has resulted in the general adoption of adequate cleaning methods throughout the infested areas.

This fact makes it possible to administer the regulations by substituting for the separate examination of each car or each sack of corn, less expensive but equally efficient measures, namely, (a) inspection of dealers' premises at frequent intervals, (b) dealers' agreements to comply with the regulations, and (c) regular inspection of corn in transit to see that dealers are complying with such agreements.

Under the amended regulations, each dealer who desires to ship corn out of the infested areas will be required to shell the corn and to maintain equipment capable of cleaning it so as to eliminate cobs and debris; also to file a signed agreement not to ship corn to uninfected States until it has been shelled and carefully cleaned. Inspections will be made from time to time to be sure that the dealers are complying with these provisions.

Certificates good for 30 days from the date of inspection will be issued in place of the forms used last year which were valid only on the individual shipments examined.

Those affected by the change are dealers in both seed and corn for feeding in the European born borer infested parts of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, West Virginia, New Jersey, New York and the New England States.

Growth of Canning Industry in United Kingdom

It is learned on reliable authority, reports the Assistant Trade Commissioner at London, that during the current year new canning machinery to the value of something like $120,000 has been purchased either for installation in new canning plants, or to replace older equipment in existing factories. The statement is made by another authority that altogether this season nine new installations of machinery for canning food are coming into operation.

One of the most important of these is the Wisbech pea and vegetable canning factory. It is claimed that this factory marks a definite move forward toward bringing the canning of peas and vegetables on to commercial proportions analagous to those of France and America. However, the hopes of those interested in promoting the British canning industry are mainly centered around the soft fruits. It is not believed that the possibilities for canning vegetables are very great, except possibly in the case of peas, as the English climate permits of a much longer

season for growing fresh vegetables than is true for most parts of the United States. Further, it is not believed that much expansion can be looked for in the case of apples, owing to the very great fluctuation of the amount of this crop from year to year, and also to the difficulty of competing in price with the imported product. As regards peaches, apricots, and pears, which form by far the bulk of the canned fruits consumed, there is, of course, no possibility of competition from the United Kingdom canning industry.

Handbook of Labor Statistics Issued

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has issued as Bulletin No. 439 a "Handbook of Labor Statistics, 1924-26," which brings together in convenient form digests of the material published by the Bureau during the three years 1924, 1925 and 1926. The Bureau publishes from twenty-five to thirty bulletins each year and the handbook is an effort to bring together the material of present-day interest and value in reference work form. Besides the results from the bureau's studies and investigations, the handbook also contains material relating to various phases of the work of the Women's Bureau, the Children's Bureau, and some other government agencies. There are over 800 pages in the volume, for which a detailed index is provided. Copies are obtainable from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., at $1 each.

Should Acquaint Buyers With Effect of Storage Temperatures

It is important to the canning industry that large buyers of canned foods know how to store them. In this connection the Association is informed that the medical officers in the Eighth Corps Area have been advised by bulletin as to the experimental work done by the Research Laboratory on storage of canned foods. The following item, taken from a bulletin issued by the Surgeon's office in the Eighth Corps Area, might well be brought by canners to the attention of the medical officers of the army posts in their districts:

"It is a well known fact that the temperature at which canned foods are stored has a great bearing on their spoilage.

"Kohman and Sanborn have recently issued a bulletin from the Research Laboratory of the National Canners Association relative to storage temperatures for canned fruits which should be of interest to Medical Officers of this Corps Area.

"The authors state that the metal dissolved from a can by the acid of fruit juices being a simple chemical reaction in-

creases markedly with the temperature. For example a certain amount dissolves at 32° F., in a given time, this amount is approximately doubled at 50° F., is fourfold at 68° F., is eight times as much at 86° F., and 16 times at much at 104° F.

"This experimental work demonstrates that storage temperature is the greatest controllable factor affecting the formation of hydrogen springers, hydrogen swells, perforations and deterioration in quality due to loss in color.

"In the summertime at most of the border stations the temperatures of storage warehouses are high. Care should be exercised at these posts in the selection of storage space and the coolest room possible utilized."

Insect Pest in Loganberry-Growing Districts

Another problem in the control of insect pests has developed in the Northwest, where considerable trouble is being experienced this year with an insect identified as the *Byturus Unicolor* or a closely related species. While the insect has caused some slight damage for the past five or six years, this is the first year it has been present in sufficient numbers to cause much trouble. Entomologists of the Department of Agriculture are making a study of the pest in order to prepare a program for control measures. Canneries in the district are carefully inspecting deliveries and not accepting loganberries from fields known to be infested, and in this way are maintaining a high standard for the canned berries.

Car Loadings

The loadings of revenue freight for the week ended July 30 totaled 1,045,621 cars, an increase of 33,197 cars over the preceding week, but a decrease of 50,376 cars as compared to the corresponding week last year. The chief falling off, as compared with last year, was in the loadings of coal which decreased 33,901 cars.

Retail Trade in July

Retail trade of 615 department and other stores reporting to the Federal Reserve System was 3.6 per cent smaller in July of this year than in the same month last year, owing in part to the fact that five Sundays in July of this year resulted in one less business day than in July, 1926. On the basis of daily averages the value of sales in July of this year for the country as a whole was about the same as a year ago. Sales of two mail order houses were 3 per cent larger than a year ago, and those of five and ten-cent chain stores (eight chains) were about 7 per cent larger.

Portuguese Sardine Industry Encounters Difficulties

The American Consul at Lisbon reports that the sardine trade has labored under many difficulties during the past month. The movements of the schools of sardines have been very erratic, as they have been, at times, fairly plentiful off some parts of the coast, while off many other sections where sardine packing plants are established, they have not been encountered at all. In addition to the scarcity of fish there has been a very considerable falling off in orders for canned sardines from abroad.

Dates of Canning Crop Reports

The U. S. Bureau of Agricultural Economics has announced the following revised program for reports on canning crops:

	Preliminary Acreage		Revised Acreage and Forecast of Production		Revised Report on Acreage and Production	
	Date Schedule	*Date Report*	*Date Schedule*	*Date Report*	*Date Schedule*	*Date Report*
Snap beans	June 1	July 15	Aug. 1	Aug. 15	Sept. 1	Oct. 1
Sweet corn	June 1	July 15	Aug. 1	Aug. 15	Oct. 1	Dec. 1
Green peas	May 1	June 1	June 1	June 15	Aug. 1	Sept. 1
Tomatoes	June 1	July 15	Aug. 1	Aug. 15	Oct. 1	Dec. 1
Cabbage-kraut	July 8	Aug. 8	Sept. 1	Sept. 8	Nov. 8	Dec. 1
Cucumbers for pickles	July 8	Aug. 8	Sept. 1	Sept. 8	Oct. 1	Dec. 1

Questions Constitutionality of Feature of Federal Trade Commission Act

In a petition filed in the Supreme Court by the Arkansas Wholesale Grocers Association, et al., the question is raised whether that provision of the Federal Trade Commission act that "the findings of the Commission as to the facts, if supported by testimony, shall be conclusive," violates the constitution of the United States. This petition asks a review by the higher court of the judgment of the Circuit Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit which sustained the proceedings by the Federal Trade Commission against the Arkansas Wholesale Grocers Association, its officers and members. The Department of Justice has filed a brief in opposition to the granting of this writ.